

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the alarm control portion judges whether an abnormality has occurred and whether the alarm is to be displayed or not on the basis of the permissible value calculated by the permissible value calculation portion and a measured value obtained from the measured IC.

Claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form to include the features of claim 1 (prior to amendment).

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, par. 2, as allegedly indefinite because of insufficient antecedent basis for several features. That rejection appears to be incorrect. In particular, antecedent basis for the phrase "the permissible value" in line 8 of claim 1 is found in line 5. Similarly, antecedent basis for the phrase "the alarm" in line 10 is found in line 2 of the preamble to claim 1. In view of those remarks, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under section 112, par. 2.

Claims 1-4 were rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6, 133,727 (Chun et al.). As discussed below, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

The Chun et al. patent discloses an apparatus that operates in one of two modes: (i) a first mode for testing the semiconductor device tester, and (ii) a second mode for determining whether a candidate device is suitable as a new "standard" device. In the second mode, the candidate device is repeatedly subjected to various tests. If the candidate device fails any of the tests, it is eliminated from consideration as a "standard" device. If all the test results are within specifications, then the tester collects the test results and calculates mean values and standard deviations for the collected results (col. 4, lines 23-29). The Office action states that those functions correspond to the functions performed by the "sampling control portion" and the "permissible value calculation portion" recited in claim 1. Based on the calculated data, the tester decides whether the candidate device is suitable for use as a standard device, which,

according to the Office action, corresponds to the function performed by the “alarm control portion” of claim 1.

Claim 1, however, is directed to an alarm display unit for displaying an alarm when an abnormality occurs in the measured IC. In contrast, as explained above, the Chun et al. patent is directed to determining whether a candidate device is suitable as a “standard” device. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that distinction. In view of the foregoing remarks and amendment, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 2.

The additional features recited in claims 3 and 4 are not disclosed or suggested by the Chun et al. patent. For example, there is no disclosure of setting the permissible value at $\mu + 3\sigma$, as recited in those claims. Although the Chun et al. patent refers to mean values and standard deviations, the values disclosed are different (*see, e.g.*, col. 5, lines 1-5 and 45). There is absolutely no suggestion of using a value of $\mu + 3\sigma$. At least for those reasons, the rejections of claim 3 and 4 should be withdrawn.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

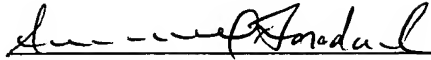
Applicant : Hiroto UCHIYAMA
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Respectfully submitted,

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Samuel Borodach
Reg. No. 38,388

Fish & Richardson P.C.
45 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 2800
New York, New York 10111
Telephone: (212) 765-5070
Facsimile: (212) 258-2291